



DEPARTMENT OF POLICE MEDIA SERVICES DIVISION

2350 RESEARCH BOULEVARD ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850-3294 240-773-5030

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Media Services Division, 240-773-5030

Year-End 2008 Crime Statistics

Montgomery County Police Chief J. Thomas Manger announced today that the crime statistics for the 2008 calendar year show a 1.4% increase in total reported crime within Montgomery County. Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) statistics for year-end 2008 as compared to the same period in 2007 show:

- **Part I Crime increased 5.3%** (from 25,629 to 26,975)
- **Part II Crime decreased 0.8%** (from 45,862 to 45,518)
- **Overall, Total Crime**
(Part I and Part II totals) increased 1.4% (from 71,491 to 72,493)

Part I Crimes Increased by 5.3%:

Murder:	increased by 10.5%	(from 19 to 21)
Rape:	increased by 1.6%	(from 131 to 129)
Robbery:	increased by 0.4%	(from 1,096 to 1,100)
Aggravated Assault:	increased by 2.5%	(from 815 to 835)
Burglary:	increased by 1.5%	(from 3,551 to 3,603)
Larceny:	increased by 8.5%	(from 17,536 to 19,027)
Auto Theft:	decreased by 9.1%	(from 2,483 to 2,258)

Part II Crimes Decreased by 0.8%:

Part II crimes are defined as minor assaults, arson, forgery-counterfeiting, bad checks, embezzlement, stolen property, vandalism, weapons offenses, prostitution, sex offenses, controlled dangerous substance (CDS) violations, gambling, family offenses, juvenile offenses, liquor law violations, disorderly conduct, suicide, and non-traffic offenses.

An analysis for the year of 2008 includes the following:

Homicide up 10.5%

There were 21 homicides recorded for 2008. Over half of the victims (11) knew or were related to their killer. Two victim's killers remain unknown. Seven victims died as a result of a robbery. Eight victims were killed with a firearm (38.1%) and five by cutting or stabbing (23.8%). Two homicides were recorded in 2008, but likely occurred in 2007. They were the Bowman girls whose bodies were discovered in Charles County in September.

Rape up 1.6%

There were 131 rapes recorded in 2008, two more than in 2007. Of those, 82.4% were completed rapes, 17.6% were attempted rapes. Victims previously knew or were related to their attacker in 77.9% of the incidents, with 22.1% being "stranger rapes". Evidence showed that 36% of the incidents involved alcohol and/or drug use prior to the assault.

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2008 Year-End MCP Crime Stats – 2

Robbery up 0.4%

Commercial robberies were down 16.1% (149 to 125). However, other robberies including street robberies, showed an increase from 947 to 975, for a 3% increase.

Aggravated Assault up 2.5%

There were 835 of these incidents in 2008 compared to 815 in 2007. The display or use of a weapon occurred in 72% of the assaults. There were 326 domestic assaults. Police officers were victims in 29 incidents.

Burglary up 1.5%

There was a slight decrease (1.1%) in commercial burglaries and a 2.87% increase in residential burglaries. One defendant may be responsible for up to as many as 100 burglaries. Vacant homes were targeted in 4.7% of the total number of residential burglaries. A door or window was left open or unlocked in 25.4% of residential burglaries.

Larceny up 8.5%

For the second year in a row, the larceny number was driven by thefts from vehicles or theft of vehicle parts (from 9,047 in 2007 to 10,602 in 2008 for a 17.2% increase). Other larceny categories, such as shoplifting and thefts from buildings, showed minimal change.

To be even more specific, this increase is mostly due to thefts of items left in vehicles. Although always a crime issue, it became more problematic in 2007 and 2008. There seem to be many reasons for this.

There has been consistent growth in ownership of personal technology items such as wireless phones, iPods, laptops, and GPS devices. Consequently, opportunity for theft of these smaller items also increases. GPS units continued to be extremely popular targets. The preliminary numbers showed over 900 GPS units being stolen in 2007 compared to over 2,400 in 2008. This translates to an approximate 150% increase. Furthermore, the analysis showed that about 25% of these events were reported to have occurred when the vehicle was left unlocked or with windows down.

Auto Theft down 9.1%

The total number was 2,258 in 2008; down from 2,483 in 2007.

Montgomery County Police Chief Tom Manger said, "Our analysis of the 2008 crime statistics reveals some good news and some areas for improvement. Our largest increase came in the Larceny category. This includes shopliftings, thefts from vehicles, etc. Larcenies were up 8.5% in 2008. On a more positive note, robberies stayed relatively steady in 2008, up less than 1%. With an increase of robberies between 1999 and 2006, I am encouraged that the numbers have stayed about the same over the past two years. One of the bright spots in our crime statistics is a 9.1% reduction in stolen cars. The detectives in our Central Auto Theft Section are doing a great job making arrests and reducing the number of vehicle thefts. Locking your car doors, not leaving items in sight, and not keeping an ignition key in an unattended vehicle are still the best ways to prevent vehicle theft. Additionally, all residents should continue to call the police when they see anything suspicious and should report crime when it occurs. By any measure, Montgomery County continues to enjoy a very low crime rate."

Note: A copy of these crime statistics, as well as, those from previous years are available on the Montgomery County Police website under the Crime Stats link on the Media Services/Press Release page at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/police. Or a copy can be picked up at the Montgomery County Police Headquarters, 2350 Research Boulevard, Rockville, MD.